FRANK CARPENTER FINDS THE QUAINTEST PEASANTS OF EUROPE IN HOLLAND'S BACKWOODS.

A Visit to the Island of Marken in the Zuyder Zee—Dutch Farms and Farming—Small Estates and Low Wages—Among the Dairymen Where the Cattle Live With the People—How Cows Are Cared For—A Look at the Alkmar Cheese Market—The Tulip Farms of Haarlem.

"IN HOLLAND'S BACKWOODS"

Special Correspondence of The Sunday Republic.

Amsterdam, Feb. 16.—If you want to see the Dutch as they are you must go to the backwoods of Holland.

You will find there districts where the people dress the same from generation to generation and where their customs are unchanged by the ages.

This is so on some of the islands of Zeeland, lying in the mouth of the Scheldt and also in North Holland on the edge of the German Ocean.

Take for instance the Island of Marken, in the Zuyder Zee, not far from this great city of Amsterdam.

It seems to be another world. The people look down upon modern clothing and dress as the Dutch did fifty years ago.

The men wear bloomers so full at the hips that you could make a dress skirt out of one pair of trousers.

They have roundabouts or shirt waists of black wool, with big silver buttons running in two rows down to the waist, where the trousers are fastened by buttons as large a an after-dinner coffee cup saucer. The trousers stop at the root of the calf and below are woolen stockings and clogs.

The women wear gorgeous red and white caps, red bodices and white skirts, which fall to the knees and below have blue or black stockings and clogs.

Their caps come down almost to the eyes, ending in a fringe of banged hair, which covers the ears, a curl of hair hanging down each cheek to the shoulder.

I went out to Marken one day and spent the day photographing the people and houses.

I had no trouble in getting good pictures, for every man, woman and child was ready to pose for a certain number of pennies, and the little ones trotted along at my heels in their clogs begging me to take their pictures and then asking for money.

Even the men demanded money when photographed, and I think the burgomaster himself would have posed for less than a gulider. I usually paid 4 cents a person, and a little more when I photographed in the houses.

The houses of Marken are low, one and a half-story buildings, with ridge roofs painted black, built along narrow streets in little villages here and there over the island.

I entered one at the invitation of the owner, an old Dutchman, who wore a pair of trousers each leg of which was as big as a two-bushel bag.

His whole house was not more than twenty-four feet square, but it was so clean that you could see your face in everything in it.

FLOORS SCRUBBED LIKE
A KITCHEN TABLE.

The floors were scrubbed like a kitchen table on Saturday night, and the plates on the walls fairly shone.

About the room were cupboards, each containing a bed, with the whitest of pillows and quilts beautifully embroidered.

The kitchen utensils were copper, and two brass candlesticks, which shone like gold, stood on a shelf under the plates.

On my way to Marken I stopped at Broeck, a little farming town in the midst of the meadows, to see a cheese factory. The factory was house, stable and cheese-making establishment combined.

This is so throughout the dairy regions of Holland. The hay is stowed away in the garret, and one-half of the house is given up to the cows, which are brought in doors during the winter and kept there.

The stable part of the house had accommodation for thirty cows, two for each stall, and it was cleaner than the average American kitchen. The cows were out during my visit, but I walked with clean feet from stall to stall, making notes of the arrangements.

The walls of the stalls are painted black to the height of the cows and white above that.

In front of each stall there is a window with lace curtains over it, and at the back a drain six inches deep, which is flooded daily with water and kept so clean that there is little perceptible odor.

But as for that the Dutch say that cow smells are healthful, and the farmers do not mind them at all.

I was interested in the arrangements to keep the cows clean. Every cow is well bedded, and it has, in addition, a rope the size of a clothes line with a strap loop at its end to hold up its tail.

One end of the rope is fastened to the rafters just over the cow, so raising the tail that there is no danger of it being flirted through the milk or into the eye of the milker.

In a room adjoining this was the cheese room with a hundred balls of fresh Edam cheese on the racks.

CHEESE OF A RICH
YELLOW COLOR.

The cheese was of a rich yellow color and more delicious than any we have in the United Staes. I was shown the cheese presses, and as I examined them I noticed some American oil stoves on the shelves near by, an evidence that the American invasion has evidently found its place in this out-of-the-way factory.

The old lady who owned the establishment explained the processes of cheese-making, bobbing the gold horns over her eyes to and fro as she did so.

I like the Dutch country people! They are the quaintest of all the characters of the Netherlands, and they remind you of the pictures of Holland you see in the galleries.

The people of the towns dress about the same as we do, but in the back districts are girls with lace caps and helmets of gold, silver and brass, and also corkscrew gold horns sticking out on each side of the eyes.

The women working in the fields wear black hats and wide linen skirts, and it is not uncommon to find a young man with a thick mop of hair cut straight off at the neck, a richly embroidered shirt, a round-trousers of velveteen, which look like enormous with enormous silver buttons and mous bags tied in at the knee.

The Dutch are plain and simple in their ways. They are sober-looking, but they can laugh upon occasions, and many of them are hospitable.

More than half of the farmers of Holland own the lands which they farm, but the holdings are comparatively small.

There are lot in the whole country 200 farms, each containing more than 250 acres, and 80,000 of the farms have each less than fifteen acres. Indeed, a large part of Holland is tracts of heath or of swamp and water, which are good for nothing.

SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND
ACRES IN FORESTS.

There are two and one-half million acres in pasture, and more than 600,000 acres in forests, so that the land actually cultivated does not comprise more than one-third of the country.

The people are more devoted to stock farming and dairying than to tilling the soil. The country raises excellent grass, and there are now here something like a million and a half cattle, chiefly Holsteins. There are a million and a quarter hogs, more than half a million horses and 750,000 sheep.

Some of the chief dairy regions are in the north, and at Alkmar is a famous cheese market, to which the people from seventy or eighty villages bring in their cheese for sale.

Each cheese is marked with the initials of its maker. The stock is spread out on waxed cloths, and is bought by wholesale merchants, who ship it to all parts of the world.

Holland exported about $5,000,000 worth of cheese in 1900, the bulk of the product going to England, Belgium, Germany and France.

Thousands of tons of this are sold at Alkmar, the stuff being brought in in wagons over the road, on barges up the canals and by the small farmers in dog carts. The price of cheese makes good or bad times in the dairy regions, and by the rise or fall of a cent or so a pound the farmer is happy or miserable.

I am surprised to see how well the Dutch care for their cattle. They treat them like children, and are careful that nothing is done to excite or disturb them.

On a cold day, if in the fields are blanketed, and when hot the blankets are often kept on as a protection from the flies. The cows are fed in the fields, and the milking is done in the pasture, the farmers claiming that the animals should not be worried by being driven into the stable.

On large farms the milk is collected by wagons, and on the small ones the milkmaids often bring it in themselves, using a yoke which fits over the shoulders, with a bucket hung to each end.

In France I found the cattle tied to stakes to keep them from destroying the crops next the pastures. Here in Holland nothing is tethered or watched. There are but few fences, but little canals, two or three feet wide, take their places.

The gate to a field is often a drawbridge, which is let down when the animals pass in or out, but at other times remains up.

Other bridges have gates built upon them, and it looks funny to see such gates standing here and there alone in the fields.

CANALS TAKE
THE PLACE OF FENCES.

The farmers are everywhere thrifty. Nothing goes to waste. The haystacks are roofed with boards or thatched in such a way that the thatch can be lowered as the hay is fed out.

All woodwork is painted, and rot and rust are not to be seen. Indeed, the only things that show signs of decay here are the windmills, some of which are hundreds of years old.

In some cases these have been replaced by steam or oil engines, but they still do a great deal of pumping and grinding. You see them everywhere upon the Dutch landscape; some are huge affairs, with arms thirty or more feet long, and great stone or brick towers rising high above the rest of the landscape. Some saw lumber and others grind flour for the stock. It takes only two men for a large mill, so that the expense of running is slight. I am told that a large mill costs $1,000 or $2,000, and that the smaller ones are much more expensive than the steel structures of a similar kind in America.

The Dutch make money out of gardening, and especially flower gardening. They raise vegetables and fruits for England, but their peaches and pears lack flavor, though they are full of juice.

They taste to me much like the fruits of Japan, which has about the same climate.

There are parts of Holland, however, which are just right for flowers. Take the region about Haarlem, where more bulbs are raised than at any place in the world. The soil there is a mixture of sand and loam, just fitted for the best of tulips, hyacinths and gladioluses.

There are syndicates and individuals at Haarlem who do a big business in bulb raising. They have patches of tulips, hyacinths and others bulbs acres in extent.

HYACINTHS SUGGEST
OLD-FASHIONED CRAZY QUILT.

The hyacinths load the air with their perfume, and the fields are of such colors that in passing through on the railroad at certain times of the year, you seem to be traveling over a crazy quilt more gorgeous than any ever put together in reality.

There are in all about 2,000 different kinds of tulips raised here; 2,000 varieties of gladioluses and 1,700 hyacinths.

The bulbs are planted in trenches, with the large plants in the center and the small ones at the side. The varieties are kept separate, each row being labeled with its own name.

The most of the bulbs exported by Holland are raised near Haarlem, and this means an amount equal to about $5,000,000 annually, much of which comes from the United States.

It was at Haarlem that the best tulips were raised during the great craze, when such bulbs brought their weight in gold. That was about the only time that the Dutch lost their heads and went wild over speculation.

They speculate still, but most of their enterprises are on an investment basis. During the tulip craze, along about when Boston was started, one Haarlem tulip bulb brought $1,500, with a team of gray horses and a carriage thrown in, and an Amsterdam bulb was sold for twelve acres of land. Both of these bulbs were of the variety known as the Semper Augustus, of which there were then only two in existence.

At the same time other varieties brought enormous sums. Tulip buying was a regular business and men grew rich and poor from the trade.

Some Dutch mortgaged their houses to buy tulips, and the loss of a peck of bulbs caused a man's ruin.

The Dutch tulips now sell for ordinary prices, but they are still handled on business principles, and both cultivation and marketing have been reduced to a science. The bulbs are set out in September and October. They are carefully cultivated by skilled workmen, many of the farms employing hundreds of hands. They are packed for the market just so and are shipped to seed and flower dealers all over the world.

I doubt if the ordinary Dutch farmer makes money. Take the 80,000 who have less than fifteen acres. They cannot at best produce more than a living. Indeed, some of these are selling their farms and renting others.

FARM LABORERS HIRED
FOR 30 CENTS A DAY.

Lands are high and rents are calculated at about 3 per cent of the land values.

Wages are very low. A good farm hand can be hired for from 30 to 40 cents a day, and a common price is $80 a year, with a suit of clothes and a pair of boots thrown in. Many of the farm hands now go off to Belgium and France at harvest time, so that labor is scarce. There is also an exodus from the country to the cities and the factories, where the wages are higher.

Even in the cities the wages paid seem ridiculous in comparison with those of the United States. The Government usually pays as much as any one.

Here are some figures recently published as to what men received who worked on State contracts: Common workmen got 5 cents an hour, carpenters 6½ cents and masons and bricklayers 7 cents.

Blacksmiths received 7 cents an hour and turners, planers, fitters and iron workers 8 cents. The wages in the factories are no better, and the hours of work range all the way from nine to thirteen per day. On the farms both men and women work, and the women, as a rule, do as much as the men.

In the factories there are also women and children.

Children are allowed in the factories at the age of 12. The little ones go to their laborn at 6 o'clock, starting work on nothing but a cup of hot coffee or perhaps a piece of rye bread, and coming home to breakfast at 8. They go back an hour later, and lay off for dinner from 12 to 1, when they return to complete the day.

The wages paid children are but a few cents a day, and boys start into a trade as low as 20 cents a week.

There are fixed rules as to apprentices, some shops refusing to take them because there are no laws by which they can hold them after they have learned enough to be of value.

Of late, however, technical schools have been established, and the children will have a better chance to learn trades than in the past.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

Electric Billiards.

From Paris comes the report of a new amusement known as "electric billiards." It is played on a table, in the center of which is placed a plate of some easily electrified material.

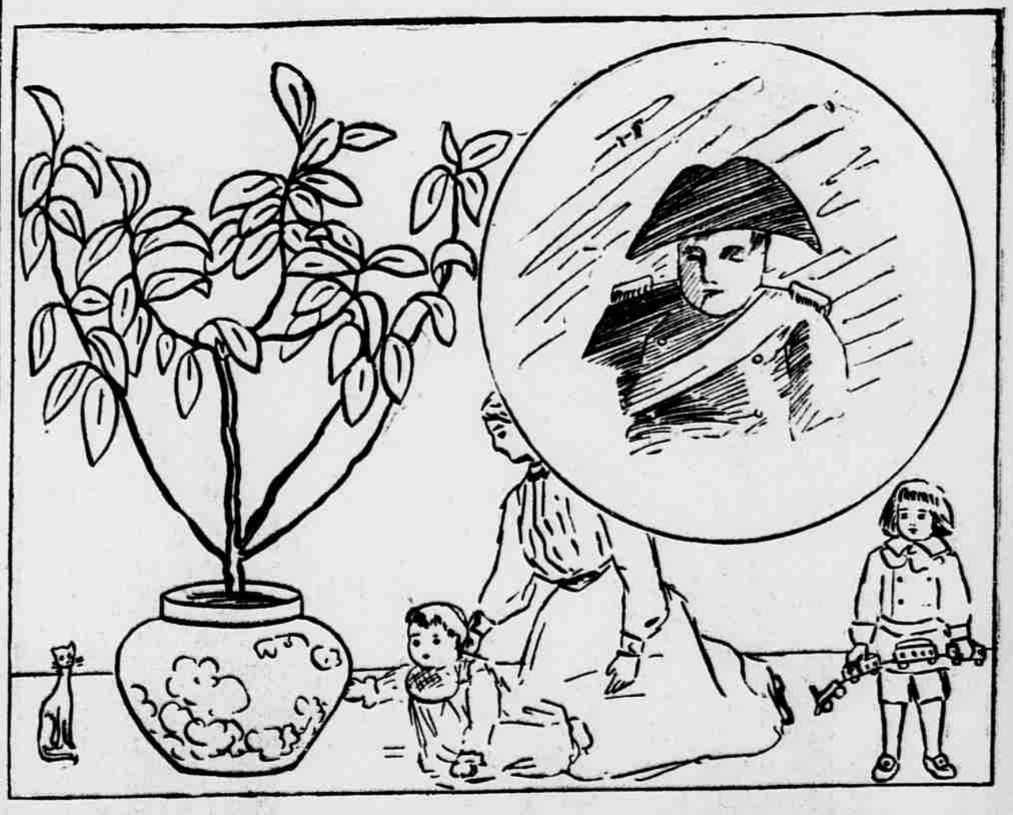
The billiard balls are of compressed pitch, and the cue is a short rod with a cork tip, prepared chemically.

The balls are, of course, subject to the influence of the electrified plate in the center of the table, and owing to this fact it is difficult to make caroms.

It is said to be purely a game of skill, and when it is introduced into New York, which it is said will be in the near future, it is likely to become popular among champion billiard players who are thirsting for new difficulties to conquer, as well as by all others who find handling the cue a fascinating pastime.

A GREAT BOTANICAL DISCOVERY

PRACTICAL VALUE OF THE BELOVED RUBBER PLANT AS OUTLINED BY HENRIETTA HUMMER.



WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

Modern life is like a three-ringed circus, and he who has the longest neck gets the best of it. We are told that our ancestors were quiet, leisurely people who drifted through life taking things as they found them, always at their ease, never in a hurry.

Perhaps that is why their portraits look down from the walls with such an evident expression of disapproval. We, their grandchildren, no longer drift. If we did, we should quickly drift out to sea and disappear. Unlike them, we are nervous, active, quick-witted and supple in the neck.

It is in this last respect that we differ most radically from those who went before us. Scientists find that there is 50 per cent more rubber in the neck of a successful man now than there was twenty years ago.

And there is need that there should be. If a man cannot see backward as well as forward, and on all sides as well, how is he to make any progress through the whirlpool that we call modern life? If a woman's neck is not as lengthy as a swan's, how is she ever to keep up with all the things that her intensely modern neighbors are doing?

All thinking people admit these facts. Every one realizes the crying need of rubber necks. Yet it is only here and there that we see a finely developed specimen. The owner smiles mysteriously, admits that his or her success is due to the possession of a rubber neck, but refuses to tell how that valuable physiological condition is obtained.

Too much cannot be said against such selfishness. What if all great discoveries were kept secret in this manner? Where would the human race be now? What if the man who invented printing had kept it for his own amusement or the astonishment of his friends? What if Columbus had gone back home and never told? All the world would have lost by it. And yet there have been people who have known the secret of acquiring rubber necks and let that secret go down with them to heir graves.

Napoleon must have known.

His life proves it. And to a keen observer the apparent shortness of the neck in his portraits shows it to have been of that extremely fine quality of gutta percha that snaps back instantly into place. The artists chose to represent the great man in his quiet moments. But Napoleon on the battlefield, Napoleon in the council chamber, must have been a different man.

Only think how that neck must have shot suddenly forth when no one expected it, enabled its owner to rubber quickly all around, see all that was in sight and more too, and then how it must have snapped back firm and short and strong, ready for use again at an instant's notice. Yet he never told. His knowledge died with him.

Astonishing as it will seem to future ages the secret is now about to be given to the world for the first time. In this humble and unpretentious essay I shall endeavor to clear up the mystery.

So simple is the explanation that the reader will say to himself: "Why, of course! How odd that I never thought of it!" Reader, has it never occurred to you that coincident with the increase of rubber-necks in America has been the astonishing growth in popularity of rubber plants? Were there electric lights in our cities before there were electric light plants? Would we expect to find oysters on our tables without oyster-plant in our gardens, or pie without pie-plant? The newest housekeeper knows better than that.

The rubber plant has long been known and revered as a household idol, as a symbol of the home, it has long been loved almost as a member of the family. It has stood in the minds of many for the very thought of home itself.

It has held as high a place as the sacred fire upon the hearth did in the minds of the people of ancient Greece. Mottoes have been worked in shaded silk by loving fingers bearing the legend, "What is Home Without a Rubber Plant?" and hung on the walls of our drawing-rooms, and friends coming into the house have been greeted by the exclamation, "See how our rubber plant is growing!"

But of the practical value of the beloved plant too little has been known. With a strange, perverse blindness, people have refused to see that families brought up in a pious reverence for the household rubber tree have invariably turned out successful men and women. Very little is yet known of the exact manner in which rubber is taken into the systems of those who come into close contact with a healthy rubber plant, but that such is the case, no one who looks into the matter can for a moment doubt. Let a rubber plant be introduced into a family, and the effect will soon be observed.

The constitution of every member of the family will begin to develop a certain elasticity, and their necks to become more elongated and easily extended. This will give them a better grasp of current events, and the knowledge of details that insures success.

Too much cannot be said in favor of the adoption into every home of a rubber plant. Parents who wish to do their best for their children should take this matter seriously into consideration, and people who feel that they have not been a success in life should remember that it is never too late to buy a rubber tree.

How Young Men Can Earn Money—Advice by the Oldest Illinois Millionaire

Bloomington, Ill., March 7.—One of the oldest millionaires in Illinois lives here. His name is Abraham Brokaw, and he is 85 years of age.

He accounts for his wealth by saying that he always stuck to what he set out to do. His vigorous health he attributes to the fact that he has never tasted liquor or used tobacco in any form.

Mr. Brokaw was a personal friend of Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas. In fact, he knew all of the prominent men of Illinois at that time. Peter Cartwright, the blunt old Methodist evangelist, who expounded the gospel with his fists whenever it became necessary, was a close friend of Mr. Brokaw.

The Bloomington millionaire has lived to see all of his former associates pass away.

KNEW DISTINGUISHED MEN.

He was but a young man when the little company of lawyers, Stephen A. Douglas, David Davis, Wells Colton, Abraham Lincoln, Jesse B. Thomas and others accompanied Judge Treat on his circuit to hold court. They would come from Springfield to Bloomington for a week, then mount and again move on to Pontiac for a session of a day. Again turning their horses toward Bloomington they passed through on their way to Clinton for another day's court. Brokaw always associated with them when they stopped off in Bloomington, and many a funny story has he heard Lincoln relate.

After a time this band of young men began prospering. Brokaw manufactured plows and accumulated a fortune.

Judge Treat was appointed to the United States District Court and David Davis, who subsequently moved here from Pekin, was appointed his successor. Leonard Sweet afterward located here. Colonel Orme and Ed Baker were prominent lawyers who lived here. John T. Stewart, who prepared himself for law in Lincoln's office, was in the volunteer service during the Black Hawk war, and served Illinois as a member of Congress. Ward H. Lemon became an orator and able politician. Ed Baker afterward emigrated to California, where he became a Senator.

When the rebellion was in progress he enlisted with a California regiment, and met his death at Ball's Bluff.

Judge Stephen D. Logan was a young man. He had tried and lost two or three cases in Kentucky. He had grown so discouraged that he decided to abandon the profession, but his friends rallied around him and urged him to hold on. He did and in time came to be a bright light.

LINCOLN AND DOUGLAS.

In speaking of these acquaintances the other day Mr. Brokaw said:

"Stephen A. Douglas did considerable business here and was active in the courts. He was a fine statesman and a gifted speaker. I frequently heard him talk, both in the courts and on political occasions. One day, during the Harrison campaign, court adjourned in the morning in order to hear a debate between Douglas and Lincoln in the afternoon.

"As the abolition question was red hot, public sentiment was very sensitive. In closing his speech, Lincoln, who led off, said that if his opponent tacked the wool upon Harrison's head he would pull it off again in his closing speech. When he took the floor Douglas retorted that he would begin just where the other gentleman left off, and that he would stick to the wool question.

"I was well acquainted with Lincoln. He went to the Legislature the first summer that I was here. When here he stopped at the same hotel where I boarded. That stood on Front street, just west of where the McLean County Bank is, and was kept by James Caleb. It was the leading hotel. When he came here Lincoln would always circle around among us young fellows and enjoy a good time. He was as common as any.

"In the hotel dining-room was a long dining table. One day during a term of court the coterie of lawyers were placed in a select crowd at the head of the table. The local boarders were at the lower end. Coming in a little late, Lincoln got seated at the wrong company, with the boys of the town. The proprietor invited him to go up among his professional brethren. Lincoln asked: 'Is the tea any better at the other end?' but did not move.

TRIALS FOR DENTISTS.

"Do you see these glasses?" taking a pair off his head. "They belonged to Doctor Hobbs. He and I were for several years members of the family of Lewis Bunn. He was a dentist, but as people in that day did not spend much money for dentistry that profession did not afford him satisfactory support. So he taught school and did other things. Many of Bloomington's people who are becoming elderly were his pupils. He was a leader in society, a fine dresser, and a gentleman of polish.

"Then there was old John Hendrix, the first white settler who brought a family into what is now McLean County. He was a very able man and a prominent class leader in the Methodist Church. I still have a distinct recollection of his prayers, which were the most earnest I have ever heard. I remember the first time I ever saw him. In '37, not far from Orendolph Springs, a camp meeting was being held. The Reverend Mr. St. Clare who stopped at Mr. Bunn's a good deal when here, was the Presiding Elder. As I had never seen a Western camp meeting I went down one hot August day. Both tents and log cabins were on the ground. People went into trances, fell over on the ground, and shouted lustily.

"As I was approaching a woman was shouting so loud that she could be heard for a mile. I knew very well people on the ground. I noticed an elderly man laboring on his knees in front of one of the cabins. Looking around, I saw James Price, whom I happened to know. When I asked who the old man was, he told me that it was John Hendrix. Price's eyes were filled with tears, too. That fall Hendrix passed away."

"Well, did you remove the spikes?"

"Yes; but I never got the $3."

Mr. Brokaw is one of only a few surviving settlers in McLean County. When talking of old times and faces he speaks with emotion, sometimes with eyes welling with tears.

"Very few rich men are lucky enough to reach a ripe old age," remarked Mr. Brokaw, after finishing his reminiscences. "I think the reason I have been spared is that I never broke my neck reaching out after money. Constant worrying will kill a man almost as quickly as the excessive use of liquor.

"My policy in life has been to stick to what I set out to do. I never rolled around from one thing to another. To boys who want to accumulate money, I would offer the following suggestions:

"Get a plan in your head.

"Stick to that plan.

"Keep in good company.

"Indulge no bad habits.

"Avoid the company of those who do indulge in bad habits.

"Cultivate your own abilities.

"Help yourself.

"Rely upon yourself.

"Study common sense."

In his present advanced age the old settler is still methodical. He shaves himself, heats his house with wood stoves and uses kerosene lamps. He goes to bed between 7 and 8 every evening and arises between 5 and 6 in the morning.